

CLAIMS

1. A method of assembling a panel from at least one conductive upright member and at least one elongate conductive rail having a rail channel, comprising:

transversely positioning a first upright member within the rail channel of a first rail to form a substantially flat panel framework having a first side and an opposed second side;

contacting the first rail with a first electrode at a first contact position on the first side of the panel framework; and

contacting the first upright member with a second electrode, having a polarity opposed to the first electrode, at a second contact position on the first side of the panel framework;

transmitting a welding current between the first and second electrodes to produce a weld within the rail channel which joins the first upright member to the first rail.

2. The method of claim 1 in which the first rail is characterized by a flat web and a pair of opposed side walls which extend from the web to define a rail channel, with the side wall situated on the first side of the panel framework characterized by a region which projects within the rail channel, and in which the weld is formed at this region.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

transversely positioning a second upright member within the rail channel of the first rail, in parallel and spaced relationship to the first upright member, thereby incorporating the second upright member into the panel framework;

contacting the first rail with a third electrode at a third contact position on the second side of the panel framework;

contacting the second upright member with a fourth electrode, having a polarity opposed to the third electrode, at a fourth contact position on the second side of the panel framework;

transmitting a welding current between the third and fourth electrodes to produce a weld within the rail channel rail which joins the second upright member to the first rail.

4. The method of claim 3 in which the first rail is characterized by a flat web and a pair of opposed side walls which extend from the web to define a rail channel, in which each side wall is characterized by a region which projects within the rail channel, and in which welds are formed at each such region.

5. The method of claim 2 in which the steps of welding the first upright member and welding the second upright member are carried out simultaneously.

6. The method of claim 5 in which the first upright member and second upright member are disposed in immediately adjacent side-to-side relationship in the panel framework.

7. The method of claim 6 in which the distance separating the first and second upright members is between about 4 and about 5 inches.

8. The method of claim 1 in which the width of the first electrode is least about 75% of the width of the first rail.

9. The method of claim 8 in which the width of the second electrode is at least about 75% of the width of the first upright member.

10. The method of claim 1 in which the width of the second electrode is at least about 75% of the width of the first upright member.

11. The method of claim 1 in which the first and second electrodes are characterized by a center-to-center separation of between about 2 and about 3 inches.

13. A panel assembled by the method of claim 1.

14. A barrier comprising a plurality of panels, at least one of which has been assembled by the method of claim 1.

15. An apparatus for welding a panel, comprising:
- a welding area in which a flat panel framework having opposed first and second sides may be horizontally positioned at a first welding position;
 - a first welding station situated in a first row within the welding area and positionable adjacent the first side of a panel framework in the first welding position, the first welding station comprising adjacent electrodes of opposed polarity;
 - a second welding station situated in a second row within the welding area, spaced from the first row, and positionable adjacent the second side of a panel framework in the first welding position, the second welding station comprising adjacent electrodes of opposed polarity.
16. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:
- a conveyor capable of moving the panel framework horizontally within the welding area from a first welding position to a second welding position.
17. The apparatus of claim 15 in which the welding stations in the first and second rows are capable of welding simultaneously.
18. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising;
- a third welding station situated in a first row within the welding area and positionable adjacent the first side of

a panel framework in the first welding position, the third welding station comprising adjacent electrodes of opposed polarity; and

a fourth welding station situated in the second row within the welding area, and positionable adjacent the second side of a panel framework in the first welding position, the fourth welding station comprising adjacent electrodes of opposed polarity.